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HERE'S
A TOAST TO
SMOKEY BEAR!



The Story:

A TOAST TO SMOKEY BEAR

A half dozen Junior Forest Rangers, hiking in the woods, are enjoying their lunches in a picnic grove. Smokey Bear ambles out of the woods and joins them, standing at the head of the picnic table.

"Hello, boys and girls," he greets them, looking fondly over the group. "Having a good time?"

"Oh, yes," Johnny replies, "we're glad to be in the forest."

"You know," Smokey tells them, pointing to an evergreen tree nearby, "in many ways boys and girls are like little trees."

"When trees are nourished and protected against harm," he explains, "they grow big and strong -- just like children, except that you boys and girls can pretty well take care of yourselves."

"Always remember," he urges, "when you help Smokey Bear prevent forest fires, you help little trees to grow."

"We'll remember," Johnny replies for the group. "We will help little trees grow big and strong by preventing fires."

"And we'll help ourselves grow big and strong," he promises, "by drinking plenty of good fresh milk."

"That's a good idea," Mary agrees. "How about it, kids?"

And they all rise and extend their glasses of milk as Johnny proposes:

"A toast to Smokey Bear: Here's to good health -- and a long, long life!"

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ~~Washington, D.C.~~
OFFICE OF INFORMATION, 2a below
WASHINGTON

January 25, 1955

Public Service Director
All Television Stations

Enclosed with this letter is your print of our new one-minute television short, "A Toast to Smokey Bear"!

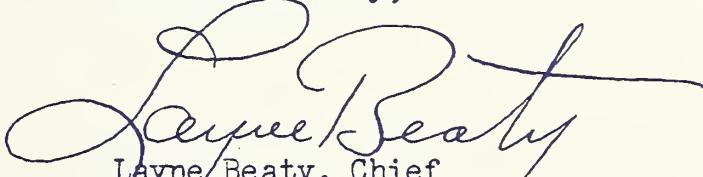
Smokey -- the "forest fire preventin' bear" -- is a popular favorite. And he's done an outstanding job in helping to reduce the toll from forest fires.

Now, Smokey is undertaking to help in another public service project. As you know, we have lots of milk -- more than we are regularly able to use. And children need milk -- lots of it is essential to their health.

So, Smokey is contributing his services to our campaign to use more milk. We think you'll agree that this "Toast to Smokey Bear" is an interesting, entertaining television film.

We hope you will find this film useful as a spot announcement, or as part of a children's program period. And we hope you will keep it, and use it often as your contribution to this public service program designed to make best possible use of our abundance of food.

Yours sincerely,


Layne Beatty, Chief
2a Radio and TV Service
with Television

Enclosure

The live Smokey Bear gained national attention five years ago, when a huge forest fire raged through Lincoln National Park, in New Mexico. During the fire, one of the crews of fighters nearly lost their lives. As the fire roared through the treetops, they lay face down on a rock slide, holding wet handkerchiefs over their faces.

When the smoke finally lifted, only one other living thing was left in all the ugly, blackened, burned-out area. A frightened, hungry black bear cub clung to what was left of a small tree. His hair was singed, and his feet badly burned. When he was taken to Sante Fe for treatment, he was photographed -- and pictures of the tiny cub, bandages swathing his badly-burned paws, appeared in newspapers across the country. Almost overnight he became famous, as his forlorn expression touched the hearts of millions of readers.

When Smokey recovered from his burns, he had become a national symbol of the need to be careful with fires in the forest. He was flown to Washington, and given quarters in the National Zoo. There he was formally presented to the children of America, and immediately became a great favorite.

Through the years, his fame has spread as the "forest-fire preventin' bear" -- the spokesman for the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention campaign, sponsored by the Advertising Council, and administered by the Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the State Forestry Departments. He has become a model for posters and cartoons, a movie actor, a radio and television artist. Forest Service officials give him major credit for the 18 percent drop, from 1952 to 1953, in forest fires.

Smokey has particular appeal to children. He has become their close personal friend, and has found in them a staunch ally in his campaign against forest fires. To back his efforts, the Junior Forest Fire Rangers have been formed, and thousands of children all over America have rushed to join.

Smokey is now a full-grown bear, visited by thousands every year. Like him, his use as a symbol has grown up, too. In 1952, Congress passed the "Smokey Bear Act" protecting Smokey from commercial exploitation, and authorizing his use in behalf of forest fire prevention. Provision was made for licensing his use on items carrying the Smokey Bear symbol, with the requirement that all items carry a message on forest fire prevention. Under this program, numerous products have been licensed, with a percentage of the profits from their sale devoted to furthering the forest fire prevention educational program.

Now, Smokey is contributing his services to another program in the public interest -- urging children to drink more milk. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is pushing a campaign to increase the use of milk. One immediate benefit of this campaign is a reduction in the current surplus of milk. Another is the expansion of future dairy markets as more children form the habit of drinking more milk. But an even more important benefit is the improved health of the children -- now, and in the years ahead, as they gain the good of drinking plenty of milk.

"A TOAST TO SMOKEY" draws the parallel between trees and children. Both little trees and children, Smokey points out, need to be properly nourished and protected from harm. Preventing fires, he points out, helps little trees to grow big and strong -- just as drinking plenty of good fresh milk helps children grow big and strong.

